

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-13

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RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 SAM-01 SAB-01

DRC-01 /162 W

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FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5003

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L JERUSALEM 213

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, PFOR, JO, IS

SUBJECT: RUMORS OF JORDAN-ISRAEL DEALS ABOUT WEST BANK

SUMMARY: RUMORS HAVE BEEN CIRCULATING ON WEST BANK THAT VARIOUS DEALS ARE BEING MADE BETWEEN JORDAN AND ISRAEL TO ESTABLISH JORDANIAN CONTROL IN THE AREA AND PREEMPT PLO.

MOST CREDIBLE REPORT IS THAT ISRAEL WILL TURN OVER CIVIL ADMINISTRATION TO JORDANIAN OFFICIALS--WEST BANKERS BEING PAID BY JORDAN--RETAINING SECURITY RESPONSIBILITY. POSSIBLY RELATED IS STATEMENT BY PRO-HUSSEIN NOTABLE THAT ISRAELIS ARE APPROACHING LEADING WEST BANKERS TO TAKE ROLES IN CIVIL ADMINISTRATION UNDER ISRAELI OCCUPATION. END SUMMARY

1. IN PAST FEW WEEKS WEST BANK HAS BEEN PREOCCUPIED WITH REPORTS AND RUMORS OF IMPENDING DEALS BETWEEN JORDAN AND ISRAEL AND OF ISRAELI POLITICAL ACTIVITY ON WEST BANK ITSELF. SOME WERE ASSOCIATED WITH REPORTS OF MEETINGS BETWEEN ISRAELI AND JORDANIAN LEADERS.

2. MOST DRAMATIC RUMOR WAS TO EFFECT ISRAEL HAD WORKED OUT
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SECRET ARRANGEMENT WITH JORDAN TO RETURN WEST BANK BIT BY BIT TO

HASHEMITE CONTROL. JERICHO WAS TO BE FIRST BIT TO GO BACK. THEREAFTER WOULD FOLLOW NABLUS, JENIN AND TULKARM. ISRAELI FORCES WOULD REMAIN IN JORDAN VALLEY TO PREVENT TERRORISTS FROM ENTERING WEST BANK. CORRIDORS TO GAZA FOR JORDAN WOULD BE ESTABLISHED. GOJ WOULD KEEP PARTS OF JERUSALEM, HEBRON AND OTHER CITIES. JERUSALEM WOULD BE OPEN CITY WITH TWO MUNICIPALITIES.

3. MORE GENERALLY CREDITED WERE REPORTS THAT ISRAEL WAS PLANNING TO TURNOVER WEST BANK ADMINISTRATION TO GREATER ARAB CONTROL. PRO-HUSSEIN NOTABLE ANWAR KHATIB TOLD US ISRAELIS WERE APPROACHING WEST BANK LEADERS (WE UNDERSTAND HE WAS ONE OF THEM) OFFERING ROLES IN SOME FORM OF SELF-ADMINISTRATION UNDER ISRAELI OCCUPATION. KHATIB CLAIMS ALL DECLINED, AND WE HAVE HEARD OF NO ONE ACCEPTING. HE BELIEVED ISRAELIS WERE ERECTING BASIS ON WHICH TO ARGUE THERE WAS NO REASON FOR THEM TO WITHDRAW, SINCE ARABS WERE ALREADY HAPPILY RUNNING THEIR AFFAIRS.

4. ANOTHER LIGHT IS SHED ON THIS BY MORE RECENT REPORTS, CARRIED IN FEB 1 EL QUDS AND ATTRIBUTED BY EDITOR ABU ZULUF TO EXCELLENT SOURCES, THAT ISRAEL INTENDED TO WORK OUT WITH JORDAN ARRANGEMENT FOR PUTTING JORDANIAN OFFICIALS IN CHARGE OF ALL CIVIL AFFAIRS ON WEST BANK. ISRAEL WOULD RETAIN ONLY SECURITY. OFFICIALS WOULD IN FACT BE WEST BANKERS BUT WOULD BE IN SERVICE OF AND PAID BY AMMAN. STORY APPEARED ABOUT SAME TIME AS REPORTS OUT OF AMMAN THAT IN FEBRUARY GOJ WOULD RECOMMENCE PAYING FORMER JORDANIAN STATE EMPLOYEES ON WEST BANK. IF JORDAN DOES THIS, MOST OF ARAB CIVIL GOVERNMENT PERSONNEL ON WEST BANK WOULD IN FACT BECOME JORDANIAN OFFICIALS AGAIN, AND STAGE WOULD BE SET FOR REPORTED ISRAELI SCHEME. AS EL QUDS HAD IT, DEFINITIVE DISCUSSION OF MOVE WAS TO TAKE PLACE BETWEEN ISRAEL AND JORDAN IN APRIL. SHIFT WOULD TAKE PLACE AT END OF YEAR.

5. FINALLY, TWO ISOLATED REPORTS FALL INTO SAME PATTERN. IT IS SAID ARAB BANKS ARE AT LONG LAST GOING TO REOPEN ON WEST BANK, A FORMULA HAVING BEEN FOUND FOR OPENING A BRANCH IN EAST JERUSALEM. IT IS ALSO SAID THAT ISRAELIS ARE INCLINED TO RECOGNIZE COMPETENCE OF MOSLEM SARI'A COURT IN EAST JERUSALEM. UNTIL NOW THEY HAVE INSISTED EAST JERUSALEM ARABS CAME UNDER JURISDICTION OF COURT IN JAFFA.

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6. COMMENT: WE ARE INCLINED TO BELIEVE KHATIB'S REPORT; OTHER RELATED ONE MAY SPRING FROM IT OR IN FACT REFLECT SAME OPERATION. WE RECALL ISRAELI NEWS REPORTS WELL BEFORE OCTOBER WAR THAT ISRAEL INTENDED TO INCREASE LEVEL OF ARAB RESPONSIBILITY IN WEST BANK ADMINISTRATION (JERUSALEM A-074, JULY 1, 1973); CURRENT PRESSURES MAY SIMPLY HAVE BROUGHT SCHEME TO FRUITION. CHANGES IN WEST BANK ADMINISTRATION, IF DONE UNOBTUSIVELY,

MIGHT NOT OPEN UP COALITION PROBLEM WITH NRP. SAME COULD HARDLY
BE SAID OF MORE COLORFUL MOVE INVOLVING JERICHO.
DAY

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